

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)**

### **Global Connections and Exchange ECA/PE/C/PY-11-32**

#### **Office of Citizen Exchanges Youth Programs Division**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) issued by the Youth Programs Division for the Global Connections and Exchange Program (GCE) in multiple countries worldwide. Proposals must conform to the RFGP, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying RFGP, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

Applicants desiring more information may contact program officer Ilo-Mai Harding, phone: 202-632-9386; e-mail: [HardingIM@state.gov](mailto:HardingIM@state.gov).

### **I. STATEMENT OF WORK AND PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES**

The Youth Programs Division, Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, announces an open competition for two or three projects under the Global Connections and Exchange Program (GCE) in the following countries worldwide: Bolivia, Botswana, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mongolia, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Samoa, Tajikistan, Thailand, Venezuela, Vietnam, and the United States.

Grant funding is intended to sponsor activities through virtual environments that unite United States and overseas schools and community youth centers. The major goal of the program is the enhancement of mutual understanding between youth leaders in the United States and their counterparts overseas.

#### **Program Components and Guidelines**

The major components of the program are outlined below. It is the responsibility of the grant recipient to fully implement the following components:

##### **1) Actively engage U.S. and overseas youth in social networking sites or other types of interactive websites for directed international dialogue.**

Each country project should include virtual environments in which participants focus on the designated themes throughout the year. Proposals must clearly outline the technology that is already in place in participating schools/community youth centers and the forms of electronic dialogue that will be utilized.

A program website should provide opportunities to collaborate, compile data, and share results. A social networking site and/or other means of electronic fora will be developed in order to enable students to share information about their country, culture and daily lives. Since this type of communication may be new to many participants, the grant recipient will need to provide them with specialized training so that they are able to navigate the sites easily, work with on-line photos and videos, publish blogs, and lead discussions.

## **2) Partner Organizations.**

All proposals must name a specific partner organization in each country that will serve to coordinate the work of schools and community youth organizations in each country. Applicants must also identify and name participating organizations in the United States and overseas that may include schools, community centers, Binational Commissions, American Corners or other organizations deemed suitable. Overseas partner organizations, participating schools, community centers, and other appropriate organizations should be selected in close consultation and cooperation with Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of U.S. Embassies.

## **3) Recruitment of Participants.**

In coordination with overseas partners and participating schools/youth centers, grant recipient organizations should recruit and select a specific number of secondary school-age youth together with teachers/youth leaders to partake in theme-based projects throughout the year. Given the reach of the Internet it is expected that broad numbers will be reached. Overseas participants must be vetted by Public Affairs Sections of U.S. Embassies.

Numbers of participants must be clearly and concisely calculated. Participating schools/youth centers should not be particularly elite, but must own hardware/software that will facilitate participation. Letters of endorsement must be submitted from all partner organizations, and participating schools and community youth organizations.

Applicants must outline clearly how all participants -- youth, teachers, and youth leaders -- will be selected to participate in the electronic dialogues and theme-based projects. Selection criteria must be enumerated. The selection plan should also answer the questions below.

- Will participants be members of the same class?
- Will they be part of an after-school club comprised of students from different schools and grade levels, or members of a community youth organization?
- Who will have oversight responsibility at each school or site?
- Will participants be clustered and work as a group or individually?
- How many teacher/youth leaders will participate in each school or other participating youth organization?
- How many teachers/youth leaders will undergo training?

#### **4) Conducting training for teachers, community youth leaders and others who will lead youth in electronic dialogues, themed projects, and community outreach.**

It is of paramount importance that the individuals who are selected to lead, guide, and train the youth/students in their projects are properly trained. These individuals are key to the sustainability of all the projects since they will often remain in place as students advance and graduate. The purpose and scope of the training, and its intended outcomes, must be described in detail. The program may include a limited number of travel opportunities for teachers and community youth leaders for the specific purpose of training.

#### **5) Arranging electronic dialogues that draw in selected youth, teachers, and schools/youth centers in the United States and overseas.**

Through the site(s) developed for this program, the grant recipient will guide, encourage, and nurture rich, theme-based discussions between program participants. Discussions will include information sharing between participants about countries, cultures, and daily lives, but will primarily focus on program themes, project development, and international dialogue. Creating a vibrant online community requires commitment and practice by its participants. The grant recipient must provide participants with specialized training in digital dialogue, online media sharing, and proper online community conduct.

#### **6) Producing theme-based projects relevant to U.S. and overseas schools and communities.**

Proposals should provide a framework for the program, delineate substantive learning plans, and clarify in detail and with a detailed timeline how program activities will be implemented. Theme-based projects should be relevant for all participants. Projects should be of a determined duration with tangible, presentable outcomes. The projects may include newsletters, videos, a website, electronic presentations, or other resources that can be shared with schools, classrooms, and community organizations that are not directly involved in the program.

Proposals must include a curriculum and detailed work plan that clarify how the themes will be developed. Activities such as competitions, a small grants program and other initiatives should be relevant to the designated themes.

Applicants must choose from the themes outlined below. Applicants may choose two or three themes, since many are interrelated. The first theme, leadership development, should be an integral part of all projects.

#### **7) Conducting community outreach.**

Great effort should be expended in order to involve communities in these theme based projects. The grant recipient should actively plan and take steps to send participating students, teachers and youth leaders out to the surrounding community, not only to educate community members, but also to ask questions of community leaders and learn what communities are doing or failing to do with the various project themes. This information should then be incorporated into the project as goals to be reached for the good of the community/country.

Since electronic dialogue has the capacity to reach large numbers of individuals, participant numbers must be large enough to make an impact in each country. The overall impact of the project must reach a wide audience of schools, youth centers, and community members, and not just the schools/organizations that are participating directly. All participating schools and youth organizations in the United States and overseas must be encouraged and motivated to have frequent communications and dialogues with each other.

The grant recipient should highlight the program in diverse educational spheres, both nationally and internationally. Efforts should be made to publicize program activities in the media, education publications and online environments, including journals, newsletters and listservs. Presentations at conferences are strongly encouraged. All representational activities should clearly acknowledge the sponsorship of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. Program highlights should be succinct and written in journalistic format. As media exposure of this program is a high priority, grant recipients will coordinate media exposure in consultation with ECA and PAS.

#### **8) Coordinating with the ECA Program Office, Public Affairs Sections (PAS) at U.S. Embassies, and Ministries of Education.**

Grantee organizations must regularly inform the ECA program officer of all program activities, and of problems that arise. PAS must also be regularly informed of significant program activities, and participate in approval of those finalists who may be selected for exchange/training in the U.S., but communication must be cleared with ECA, and ECA must be copied on all communications with PAS. If applicants are proposing to work with schools, Ministries of Education may be involved in program planning and selection of schools, and also invited to participate in or observe program activities.

#### **9) Managing all financial aspects of the grant.**

The applicant must demonstrate a history of sound financial management and the ability to manage complex budgets domestically and overseas. It must describe how it will oversee and monitor the budgets of overseas partners, other collaborating organizations, and all participating schools and community youth organizations. Maintaining reasonable costs is a key element of all program activities, and cost sharing is vital to program administration.

#### **10) Formulating a comprehensive evaluation plan.**

In order to demonstrate that the project is working toward the ECA goals outlined in the overview, applicants should devise specific objectives and link their program outcomes to those objectives. Objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time framed. The desired outcomes are not simply the successful implementation of the project activities but rather a measure of how the program activities will lead to the transformative effects expressed in the program goals.

The evaluation plan should describe specific activities and how these will be evaluated. Proposals should define indicators, that is, the concrete, observable activities that will demonstrate progress toward desired results.

Proposals should include a description of evaluation instruments and methodology, as well as how data will be organized, analyzed, and reported. The grant recipient is required to submit interim program and quarterly financial reports, and one final program and financial report to ECA's program and grants office. In addition, the grantee is required to submit regular monthly electronic updates that highlight ongoing activities. The monthly updates must be detailed and precise, and clearly state what has been achieved, the number of participants involved, and how teachers and community leaders have been trained.

The final report should answer the following questions **in detail**:

1. How did the program benefit overseas and U.S. participants?
2. How did the program serve USG foreign policy interests?
3. How will the program continue once the grant concludes?
4. How can the program be improved and expanded if funding is available?

The following items should be included in the final evaluation:

- Stated objectives
- Indicators
- Method(s) of measurement

### **11) Developing a plan for continued electronic communication among participants after the grant expires.**

Applicants should provide concrete ideas and outline specific steps for maintaining contact among participating youth, teachers, and community youth leaders after the program has concluded. All participants must be taught or clearly shown how to disseminate information about the program while it is ongoing and after it ends, and how in turn to teach their peers to participate in similar projects in the future. The steps applicants intend to take throughout the grant cycle that will ensure sustainability must be concrete, doable, and clearly outlined.

### **12) (Optional) Planning and arranging possible exchanges/trainings for a small number teachers and community youth leaders who have spearheaded the electronic dialogues and themed projects of participating youth.**

This exchange/training may be from the United States and/or to the United States and must be two to three weeks. It must be clearly demonstrated to be necessary and useful for furthering program goals and for ensuring sustainability. The travel must contain a strong training component and include meetings with peer experts. It may also include visits to schools and relevant community youth organizations, and participation in cultural activities.

Applicants must outline how participants in the exchange will be screened and selected, describe their travel itinerary and training program in detail, and explain how their visits will be facilitated and monitored for safety and quality.

### **13) (Optional) Uniting All GCE Participants.**

Applicants may propose to implement a final digital videoconference (DVC) or a series of electronic dialogues that bring together all the schools and organizations overseas and in the U.S. that are participating in the GCE, or alternately establish a common online message board for the use of all GCE participants. In these dialogues participants can share and recap activities and themes, and illustrate the projects that they are developing or have already developed under each grant. Approximate funding available is \$5,000. Note: Only one applicant will receive funding for this project component.

### **Themes for Youth Projects**

In addition to the Leadership Development theme, applicants may choose one or two other interrelated themes:

- 1. Leadership Development** – This theme is the most important and should be an integral part in the development of each subsequent theme listed below. Students will be encouraged to lead, inspire, and motivate others to effect change in their respective communities. Characteristics of true leaders will be explored and the behavior of leaders be closely studied.
- 2. Environment** – Participants will complete projects that tackle issues such as pollution, recycling, water consumption and conservation, waste management, and other relevant topics that increase environmental awareness.
- 3. Rule of Law/Civic Education** – Projects will focus on social and civil issues and ways in which government policy and respective justice systems deal with these issues. Projects may include debates, research, advocacy, and community outreach.
- 4. Social Entrepreneurship** – Participants will gain financial literacy skills and learn the difference between social and business sector definitions of entrepreneurship. Students will work together to design and operate social entrepreneurial projects that benefit and effect change in their schools and communities.
- 5. Empowering Girls and Young Women** – Participants will discuss ways and means of empowering girls and women through education, training, and confidence building. They will work together to build leadership skills, receive training in public speaking and debating skills, and learn to present their views, oral and written, in a coherent manner. The project should draw in and activate male participants and encourage them to review their attitudes regarding the role of women in society.
- 6. Peace Education** – Participants will explore how to achieve peace and harmony in the world among countries and peoples, how to utilize non-violence as did Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, and how to solve conflicts by peaceful means. Youth will be encouraged to explore organizations such as the UN, OSCE, and World Bank, and political entities such as the European Union.

7. **Food Security** – Participants will discuss and compare the agricultural production, nutrition, and accessibility of food in their respective societies. They will create websites and other multimedia as an educational tool and share information about local organizations that address food and security needs.
8. **Health** – The health of children and youth will be highlighted, and what governments and individuals must do to safeguard the health and safety of all their citizens. Students will research and make presentations on nutritional standards, the development of public health policies, and the role of education in promoting good health and healthy practices.

## **II. PROPOSAL CONTENT**

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly and completely the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items:

***TAB A – Application for Federal Assistance Cover Sheet (SF-424)***

***TAB B – Executive Summary***

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of applicant organization
2. List of countries selected for participation
3. Scope and Goals
  - a) Names of partner organizations in each country
  - b) Number and description of participants (teachers, youth leaders, and youth), schools/youth centers
  - c) Theme(s) and fields covered
  - d) Wider audience benefiting from program (approximate number of individuals and community members impacted)
  - e) Anticipated results (short and long-term)

4. Beginning and ending dates of the program
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, and total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources

### ***TAB C – Narrative***

#### ***Work Plan***

In no more than 20 double spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below:

#### **1) Vision**

Clearly outline the specific goals, objectives and desired measurable outcomes of this project. These will form the basis for evaluation.

#### **2) Partner organizations in each country and all participating schools/youth centers**

Identify its active collaborating partners in each country and list the names and locations of all participating schools/youth centers. Letters of support from partner organizations, school directors, and community youth organization leaders are mandatory and must indicate a commitment to all requirements of the program (see Tab E).

#### **3) Program Activities**

Describe in detail, in the categories below, how the program will be implemented and coordinated:

- (a) Clarify the overall themes and describe all activities, both virtual and physical, that will support the themes.
- (b) Describe the recruitment and selection process for U.S. and overseas students and teachers/youth leaders.
- (c) Outline training programs for the teachers and youth leaders who will spearhead the programs. Specifically, provide lesson plans, learning goals and timelines.
- (d) Include details on how many participants will communicate with one another and how often, also what the final product will be and how it will be presented.
- (e) (Optional) If physical exchanges are involved, describe scope of travel, the number of travelers, the timing of travel, and the precise content of content of training. Also describe other professional and cultural activities included in the exchanges travel. Always include an outline of desired outcomes.
- (f) (Optional) Describe in detail how you will work together to organize a final DVC or a series of electronic dialogues that bring together all participating schools/organizations overseas and in the United States or alternately how you will establish a common online message board for the use of all GCE participants.

#### **4) Diversity**

Describe how various program elements will promote an understanding of geographic, ethnic and socio-economic diversity of the United States and all other participating countries.

#### **5) Outreach**

Describe ways in which information about the program will be disseminated in participating schools and communities as well as in other venues. It is important to engage a core number of



schools in each country, but to also draw in other schools and community youth organizations, and surrounding communities via the electronic dialogues.

#### **6) Monitoring**

Outline how Bureau program managers and PAS will be kept informed of the timeline and implementation of each phase of the program. Clarify how this will be accomplished. Interim reports and a final report are required. The reports must focus on measuring the level of achievement of stated goals and objectives.

#### **7) Evaluation**

The evaluation plan must be designed according to point 10 in the **Project Components and Guidelines** section of this POGI, and guidelines contained in the RFGP.

#### **8) Follow-on Activities**

Describe a detailed and specific plan of action to maintain relationships among schools and community organizations in the U.S. and overseas beyond the life of the Bureau's funding. The focus should be on virtual exchanges of information, continuing joint projects, participation on the websites, and communicating by other electronic means.

#### **9) Project Management**

Identify by name the primary U.S. and overseas staff members who will be implementing this project. Clarify specific experience and expertise of these staffers regarding a wide variety of social media activities such as blogging, community development and management, social bookmarking, and project leadership. Resumes should be included in Tab E.

#### **10) Work Plan/Timeline**

Provide an accurate and detailed timeline of activities for the life of this grant that lists anticipated dates for all major electronic dialogues, the stages of work on themed projects, expected completion dates, and training of trainers. Also list projected follow on activities.

#### ***TAB D – Budget Submission***

##### **Budget Information – SF-424A**

An applicant must propose to work with at least two but no more than four countries. For a grant with the specified minimum of two countries, the minimum grant request should be \$200,000 and up to approximately \$250,000. The maximum grant request is \$425,000 for four countries. For planning purposes, the approximate funding per country is \$100,000 to \$125,000. **With more countries, per country costs should decrease.** The Bureau expects to award two to three grants under this competition with a total funding of \$850,000.

Applicants are welcome to offer sub-awards to qualified organizations. The role and activities of the sub-award organization must be clearly defined. Applicants are also requested to provide as much cost-sharing as possible, which may include investment by the private sector.

Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) regarding guidelines for a budget submission. An explanatory budget narrative must also be included.

**Suggested program costs include, but are not limited to, the following:**

- Expenses related to the training of teachers and community youth leaders;
- Educational materials: Bureau funds may be used for the purchase of software or equipment such as digital cameras, flip-cams, webcams, etc. to support online project work. Applicants should primarily seek out donations or acquisition of equipment through outside sources;
- Stipends for U.S. and foreign educators involved in project work and other activities;
- Educator/Trainer travel. Describe the plan for airline ticketing, including how it will be secured. *Important: All transatlantic or transpacific travel must comply with the Fly America Act;*
- Visas: Charges for visas to overseas countries should be listed in the budget as either a grant-funded or cost-shared item;
- Small Grants Program: Students in the United States and overseas should have opportunities to apply for small grants to develop, implement and evaluate community projects. Ideally, students will raise funds themselves to match the amount offered through the grant;
- Monitoring and evaluation;
- Follow on activities;
- Other justifiable expenses directly related to program activities.

**Allowable administration costs include, but are not limited to, the following:**

- The payment of reasonable costs for program administration, technical support and other administrative needs. Cost sharing in these areas is strongly encouraged.

***TAB E –***

***Letters of Endorsement***

Include letters of agreement from all overseas partner organizations, also from collaborating schools and community youth organizations. Letters must indicate support for the exchange in principle and the part each participating/collaborating organization will play in the support of each project. Letters must also endorse the proposed theme and joint projects, explicitly agree to train students, teachers and community youth leaders, and provide venues for projects and electronic dialogues. Letters from politicians are generally not helpful.

***Resumes***

Resumes of all program staff members, including technical coordinators, must be included in the submission. No resume should exceed two pages.

***Appendix***

Applicants are welcome to include the curriculum and sample documents, such as brief school profiles, application forms, evaluation surveys, and orientation agendas, as well as other program related material in an appendix. Please be aware that too much additional paper can detract from the proposal.

***TAB F –***

- 1) SF-424B, “Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs”.

**2)** First time applicant organizations and organizations which have not received an assistance award (grant or cooperative agreement) from the Bureau during the past three (3) years, must submit as an attachment to this form the following: (a) one copy of their Charter OR Articles of Incorporation; (b) a list of the current Board of Directors; and (c) current financial statements. Note: The Bureau retains the right to ask for additional documentation of those items included on this form.

**3) Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one- page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

**4)** Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

#### **IV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

The RFGP indicates the date the complete proposal submission is due and the address at the Bureau to which the submission must be sent. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline.

For further information regarding this program or the competition, call program officer Ilo-Mai Harding, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Youth Programs Division, (202) 632-9386, or e-mail: [HardingIM@state.gov](mailto:HardingIM@state.gov).